



Walgreen Co.
State Government Relations
104 Wilmot Road MS #1415
Deerfield, IL 60015
walgreens.com

September 20, 2017

Re: 90-Day Prescriptions

Dear Members of the House Health Policy Committee:

Chairman Representative Hank Vaupel and Honorable members of the Committee:

On behalf of Walgreen Co. (Walgreens), I thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of SB360, which examines the issue of 90-day prescriptions.

Currently, in Michigan, when a patient presents a 30-day script for a **maintenance medication** with additional refills and they want a combined fill, our pharmacists must call to get approval from the prescribing physician.

Physicians are very busy professionals and often are not available for this approval. Without immediate approval, pharmacists must wait for a call back; because our patients are also pressed for time, they are unlikely to wait and they end up with only the 30-day supply. Not only are these calls burdensome to the physicians, this also means the patient will need to return an additional two times, which is not only inconvenient, but often the patient will now need to pay two more co-pays rather than the one they could have paid, depending on their insurance coverage, if they received a 90 day supply.

In addition, there may be adherence issues if the patient is unable to return in time to receive their next refill, or forgets it all together. This could lead to further health issues and potentially additional costs.

What SB 360 does, is allow pharmacists to use their highly trained professional judgment when deciding to fill the additional refills already on an approved and prescribed 30-day script. The physician always has the ability to indicate on the script to dispense as written and no refills without approval to prevent a 90 day fill if needed.

This bill would:

- Remove the need to burden the physician with a call to verify a combined fill for a script they have already written and thus authorized refills for;
- It provides a convenience for patients, as they do not have to return to the pharmacy three times to fill the script;
- It potentially saves the patient two co-pays, and

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- Improves medication adherence, thus preventing the possibility of health issues in the event of missed medications.
- Finally, this bill allows the patient to receive their 90-day refills at their choice of community pharmacy, which results in face-to-face interaction, advice and counseling from their trusted and chosen pharmacist. This is unlike many other 90-day fill options that expect patients to receive their prescriptions via a mail order pharmacy.

I respectfully ask that you please support SB 360 and I thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Angela Hoover', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

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Remove Barriers for 90-Day Retail Prescriptions

Prescription drug costs are on the rise as the population ages and more people are diagnosed with chronic conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure requiring maintenance medications. Drug costs can be reduced with 90-day retail prescriptions over multiple 30-day prescriptions. In addition, 90-day prescription options available in retail community pharmacies increase patient access to important, life-saving medications, as well as save patients time and money while increasing adherence to medication therapies.

90-Day Retail Prescriptions Reduce Costs

A single 90-day retail prescription option produces clear savings compared to three separate 30-day prescription fills. Meaningful savings are created through lower reimbursements due to reduced dispensing fees and related ingredient costs. Patients also save money by switching to 90-day prescriptions and decreasing their out-of-pocket costs.

Additional savings are generated through increased generic utilization rates. Data show that generic utilization rates for 90-day retail prescriptions were 10.6% higher than 30-day retail prescriptions. Improvement was even greater between retail and mail-order prescriptions—20.2% for 90-day retail over 90-day mail service. Such advances in generic utilization rates can be attributed to the face-to-face interaction of patients and community pharmacists, where a patient can be counseled on their medication options.

90-Day Retail Prescriptions Improve Adherence

Patient non-adherence to their prescription drug regimen drives up healthcare costs—approximately \$290 billion annually—and is associated with higher hospitalization and mortality rates. Recent studies have demonstrated that 90-day retail prescriptions increase medication adherence by as much as 15% over 30-day prescriptions by minimizing multiple community pharmacy visits.

Barriers to 90-Day Retail Prescriptions

Some state laws, regulations and policies prevent 90-day retail prescriptions and limit patient access to critical medications. In some cases, retail pharmacists are precluded from providing the patient with a 90-day prescription by both public and private drug plans, limiting payments to no more than a 30-day supply at a given time. This outdated approach increases patient burden and cost by requiring them to pay additional copays.

In addition, 29 states currently have rules requiring pharmacists to fill prescriptions exactly as written. In such situations, the pharmacist cannot use their professional judgment to interpret the prescription or convert it to 90 days—rather the pharmacist must call the prescriber to clarify the number of days that can be dispensed.

Walgreens recommends lawmakers remove barriers that prevent retail pharmacies from dispensing or converting to 90-day prescriptions. Such barriers do not meet the demands of the current healthcare system nor do they meet the needs of patients.

Ask Lawmakers...

To remove barriers preventing retail pharmacies from filling or converting to 90-day prescriptions.

Key Facts

- Population aging and increased diagnosis of chronic conditions are driving up prescription drug costs.
- 90-day retail prescriptions produce meaningful savings through reduced dispensing fees and related ingredient costs, as well as increased generic utilization rates.
- 90-day retail prescriptions increase medication adherence by minimizing multiple community pharmacy visits, further reducing costs and increasing health outcomes.
- Some states limit payments for prescriptions to only 30 days, while other states limit pharmacists' ability to professionally interpret prescriber orders and convert 30-day prescriptions to 90-day.